

Overview/Introduction: MaineDOT Flash Facts

Topic: Crashes are not Accidents

Facts/Openers:

- Every year, nearly two hundred people die on Maine roads. While the final figures are not in yet, 2002 is shaping up as probably the deadliest of the last 10 years. Despite improvements in road and vehicle design, Maine drivers continue to kill themselves and others on our roads.
- Each fatality and each injury has its own emotional story line...The hurt affects each victim's family member, friend, co-worker and/or fellow student.
- Based on police crash reports, more than three quarters of Maine's crashes resulted from driver related factors. The primary driver errors that lead to crashes include: not paying attention to driving; traveling at unsafe speeds; failing to yield the right of way; and following too close.
- Crashes don't need to happen... people are dying, others are getting hurt, lives are being disrupted and so much of that can be prevented.
- A driving error can be the most costly mistake you ever make...financially and emotionally.

Monday:

(Viewers should interact with the following)

- Think about any crash you have been involved with or know about. Now ask this question: Was this an **accident**, that was just bad luck... or was it a **crash**, where one or more of the drivers could have done something to prevent the collision...

Your answer probably was it was no "Accident" (More than three quarters of Maine's crashes involve driver contributing factors).

-In addition to building and maintaining a quality transportation system, MaineDOT wants to remind every driver that you play an important role in crash prevention.

-During the rest of the week, we will review crash prevention behaviors that you should consistently be using.

Wednesday:

(Another interactive portion)

- Is there something in your driving behavior that makes you susceptible to a crash?
 - When you're driving the car:
 - What are you thinking about?
 - Where are your eyes focused?
 - How many other things are you doing or thinking about while you drive?

The big question-what are you missing on the road when these other things are occupying your attention?

-Imagine the things that could happen on the road that you might not be able to react to if you were not concentrating on driving.

-Think of the possible personal consequences-to you, to others in your car, occupants of another vehicle.

Friday:

You can make a difference in the tragic toll on our highways.

-Approach driving with the attitude... "**My driving style can prevent a crash**" and consistently drive with that awareness.

-Things you can do to reduce your chances of becoming a crash victim...

- * Hold off on that cell phone call.
- * Change the CD when your vehicle is stopped.
- * Put the seat belt on **before** the car starts moving.
- * Take 15 minutes and eat that burger in the restaurant.
- * Concentrate on the driving experience. (You know how after some trips you can't remember traveling down a stretch of road. Imagine if a problem on the road occurred on that same stretch-you would be slower in detecting that problem and your delayed reaction might come too late to avoid the crash.)
- * Give the other person a break. (Keep cool when: the person ahead is not going as fast as you would like; the person pulls out of the driveway just ahead of you; or you catch up to the snow plow. The inconvenience may not be fun, but don't make an unsafe move that compromises everyone's safety.)
- * Realize what little you gain when you take a chance on the road and how much is at risk.
- * Make safe driving adjustments (spelled "slow down") when road conditions are less than optimal.
- * Road situations can change in a split second, so scope out the road ahead to identify potential upcoming changes you may need to react to. (You can prevent crashes even when someone else makes an error.)
- * Think about how little time you save by going faster, and what the consequences might be. No one's life should be jeopardized just to save a few minutes.

Closer: Crashes are not Accidents! And remember, always "Be a Road Model". (Repeat through the week.)